



## Caring for children while a parent is deployed

### *Reassuring children*

Deployment is a stressful time for all family members, especially children.

**Reassuring children** during this time of uncertainty can help ease their stress.

*Use the checklist below as a guide when reassuring children about deployment.*

AS A PARENT, I:

- \_\_\_ Realize that my children might feel and display a variety of emotions during this time.
- \_\_\_ Let my children know it is okay to share whatever they are feeling.
- \_\_\_ Let my children know that other children share similar feelings when their parents are deploying.
- \_\_\_ Keep my children from viewing graphic media reports of military conflict that might raise their stress levels.
- \_\_\_ Help my children sort out what they see or hear about military action and tell them the difference between what is real and what is not.
- \_\_\_ Keep my children as close as possible to a caregiver or me during times of danger so they feel safe.
- \_\_\_ Remind my children that they are safe and cared for while the deployed parent is away.
- \_\_\_ Remind my children that the deployed parent will do everything he or she can to stay safe.
- \_\_\_ Keep a positive attitude toward the mission of the deployed parent.
- \_\_\_ Read books with my children about separation.
- \_\_\_ Give each child lots of reassuring hugs.
- \_\_\_ Comfort my children who have nightmares or trouble sleeping.
- \_\_\_ Talk about the special things we can do once the deployed parent returns.
- \_\_\_ Watch for signs of stress in my children (nightmares; excessive worry; anxiety about being away from home; anxiety about going to school or other activities; stomach aches, headaches; withdrawal; lack of interest; acting out; and sudden changes in eating or sleeping habits).
- \_\_\_ Seek professional help, if needed.



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO  
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD  
AND SEEING THINGS  
FROM HIS OR HER POINT  
OF VIEW.

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